

# BiLAT

BiLAT is a portable-PC based training program designed with a specific objective in mind: to provide students an immersive and compelling training environment to practice their skills in conducting meetings and negotiations in a specific cultural context. The application was a winner of the U.S. Army Modeling and Simulation Awards for FY08 and has been deployed as part of a training curriculum for officers assigned to foreign posts. BiLAT is available for download from the U.S. Army's MilGaming website.

In BiLAT, students assume the role of a U.S. Army officer who needs to conduct a series of bi-lateral engagements or meetings with local leaders to achieve the mission objectives. In one campaign, the student is tasked with understanding why a U.S. built marketplace is not being used. The student must gather information on the social relationships among the characters in the scenario.

Students must also establish their own relationships with these characters and be sensitive to the character's cultural conventions. Any misstep could set the negotiations back or end them completely. Students must also apply sound negotiation strategies such as finding win-win solutions and properly preparing prior to the meeting.

The BiLAT social "simulation" was developed through a collaborative, multi-disciplinary approach. USC's Game Innovation Lab was involved in the game design as well as creating a compelling set of scenarios with realistic characters that would be appropriate for the training objectives identified.

To represent and model the social and cultural elements, the BiLAT infrastructure uses research technologies including a dialogue manager, SmartBody animation technology and the PsychSim social simulation system from ICT's virtual human research project, as well as an intelligent coach and tutor to provide the student with run-time coaching and in-depth feedback during after action reviews.

Authoring tools were developed to support the content workflow. There has also been an effort to create a new scenario in the BiLAT framework within 12 weeks. BiLAT AIDE is a complementary web-based course created with the USC Rossier School of Education. The course further enhances learning by providing instruction on the theories behind the practice of negotiation and cultural understanding. BiLAT was a part of the Learning with Adaptive Simulation and Training (LAST) Army Technology Objective (ATO). The project was a collaboration between the University of Southern California's Institute for Creative Technologies (ICT), U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI), U.S. Army Research Laboratory Human Research and Engineering Directorate (ARL-HRED) and U.S. Army Simulation and Training Technology Center (STTC).

## Facts and Figures

- + Currently deployed at over 60 battle simulation and training centers throughout the Army.
- + The application was a winner of the Army's Army Modeling and Simulation Awards FY08.
- + The system has been formally transitioned to the PEO STRI and the Army's Games for Training program and can be downloaded from the Army's MilGaming website.

## Goals

- + Develop new tools, metrics, and methods that enable training developers to rapidly create effective, interactive, virtual training simulations.
- + Reduce scenario development time/costs while using realistic stories from the field.
- + Provide a better understanding of the soldier/ student learner.



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